Rights Leader 'Doubts' That Ray Killed King

UPI Photo

Rev. Jesse Jackson, center, and attorney Mark Lane, left, enter Brushy Mountain Penitentiary

Petros, Tenn. (AP)—After meeting with James Earl Ray for three hours yesterday, the Rev. Jesse Jackson said he doubts more than ever that Ray killed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"I'm absolutely convinced that he was involved but was not involved alone," Jackson said outside the walls of Brushy Mountain Penitentiary. "He said he did not kill Dr. King. I have profound doubts that Mr. Ray did it."

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Meanwhile, in Washington the House Assassinations Committee yesterday denied "on the strength of a preliminary investigation" that any of its investigators or staff used illegal methods in probing the King murder. G. Robert Blakey, the committee's chief counsel, read a four-paragraph statement to reporters that denied allegations made by Oliver Patterson Monday at a St. Louis news conference. Patterson, who described himself as an "undercover agent" for the panel, said he had tape-recorded interstate telephone calls made to Jerry Ray, brother of the convicted slayer, on the advice of his superior in the congressional investigation.

Blakey refrained from identifying Patterson by name, but said the individual making the charges "had never been an employee of the committee," although he at one time had made a statement under oath to the panel. James Earl Ray is to be taken to Washington next week to testify before the committee.

Jackson, a former King aide who was with the civil rights leader when he was killed 10 years ago in Memphis, said his efforts are now focused on winning Ray a new trial. Ray pleaded guilty in 1969 to the slaying in exchange for a 99-year sentence instead of the death penalty. Three days later, he denied killing King and has been trying to win a new trial ever since.

Washington (AP)—House investigators plan to conduct gunfire tests in Dallas to determine if an unidentified sound heard on a police tape during the seconds that John F. Kennedy was assassinated could have been a fourth shot, committee sources said yesterday. Scientific analysis suggests that if the sound was in fact a gunshot, it was fired by a second gunman, and that Lee Harvey Oswald conceivably would not have been Kennedy's lone assassin, the sources said. But they said experts could not identify the sound.